

## ABSTRACT

Methods operable through a distributed computer network are disclosed which enable direct game play against remotely situated players, of the same skill, and with payout rules of their choosing. One method enables players to gamble directly with one another. In this method, a host server receives a bet from a machine operated by each player, with each machine being connected to the host server through a distributed network. The received bets are combined into a pot, and a hosted game commences among the set of players that contributed to the pot, by prompting the players at their respective machines for inputs. Inputs are then received at the host server and at least one winner is selected from among the set of players on the basis of the received inputs. The pot is then allocated to the at least one winner in accordance with prescribed rules. Another method enables teams of players to compete directly against each other for money. That method includes the steps of establishing several teams across a distributed network., receiving an ante conveyed from each player's machine and combining the antes from all of the players into a pot. A hosted game is then commenced among the teams by prompting the players of each team at their respective machines for inputs. Inputs are thereafter received at the host server, and at least one winning team is selected from among the teams based on the received inputs. The pot is then allocated to the at least one winning team in accordance with prescribed rules.

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